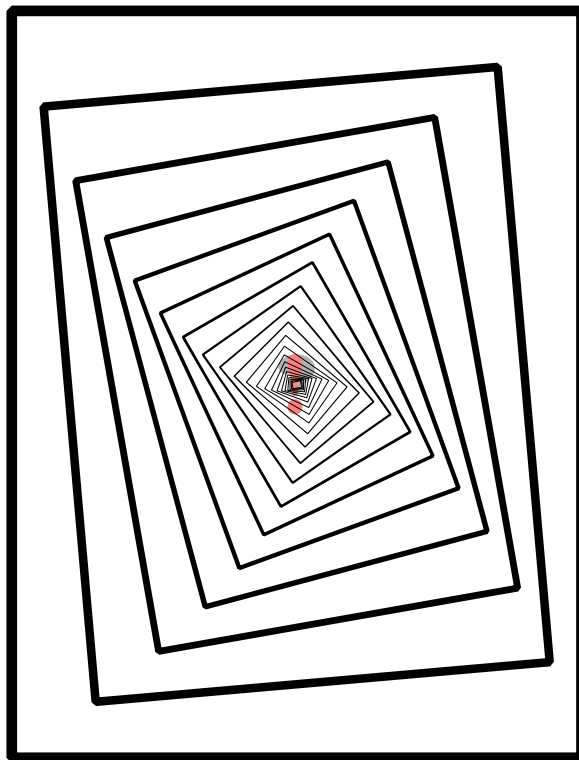


# Who Made God?



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## **Summary**

One of the questions which is often asked by atheists is “Who made God?”. This question introduces a fundamental issue in understanding the origins of the universe.

Entities can be of two kinds. There are “contingent” entities, which are capable of not existing and need to be caused, and “necessary” entities, which must always exist. No entity can bring itself into existence, as it must exist in order to cause something. Therefore every contingent entity must have been caused by some other entity.

Tracking the chain of cause and effect backwards to earlier and earlier entities, one must sooner or later arrive at a necessary entity. An infinite regress of causes is of not use because ultimately there is nothing to bring it into existence.

The only conclusion that one can draw is that there must exist some necessary cause which is capable of causing everything else.

The universe is clearly contingent as it was brought into existence by a creation event (this is colloquially known as the “Big Bang”). Therefore there must exist a necessary entity outside the universe. As the laws of nature came into existence at this creation event they also are contingent and ultimately need a necessary entity to cause them. A necessary entity is also required to define right and wrong. This necessary entity must have mind to produce the laws of nature and must have a moral sense. This is what Christians and Jews would call God.

The distinction between a necessary entity and a contingent entity is vital. Whether one is an atheist or a theist, one must have a necessary entity on which the existence of the universe rests. This is the ultimate cause of the universe.

The argument is more detailed and involved than this and includes such matters as why one cannot account for the universe in terms of quantum fluctuations in the vacuum or the decay of a primaeval atom. So read on for an account which deals with the original cause of everything.

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*“Who Created God?”*

This question is so often asked by atheists as an attempted final answer to the first cause argument for the existence of God (and often as a comeback to other arguments). It appears as the main theme in Richard Dawkins’ book “The God delusion”, where it is used as a refrain to many of the arguments in the book, often in an oblique fashion.

The argument, of course, is not a new one. It has been posed by schoolboys since time immemorial and has been answered by philosophers from the time of Aristotle onwards.

### **The First Cause Argument**

This is one of the basic arguments for the existence of God. It goes back to the time of Aristotle, and essentially is the argument that the universe requires a cause to come into existence.

### **Aristotle’s answer - First Cause**

Aristotle was, at least in theory, a polytheist, and in theory he believed in created Gods. However, his argument led him to the inescapable conclusion that one God was the originator of the universe.

Aristotle made a major study of cause and effect, in which he noted four distinct kinds of cause (see box). He then noted that everything in the universe has a cause. Usually the cause is another object in the universe; however this object also had a cause, and so on. Aristotle argued that an infinite regress of causes is impossible, and that the chain of cause and effect must ultimately have a beginning. This is the uncaused cause, or first cause, an entity which has no prior cause. Whatever one’s theology, such a cause must exist; the only alternative is an infinite regression. The problem with an infinite regression is that ultimately there is no cause for the regression itself, and Aristotle therefore rejected it.

### **The Kalam School**

Aristotle’s picture of the world of cause and effect is based on the observation that nothing can cause itself to exist. This is, of course, a logical necessity as the object would need to exist in order to cause anything, and could cause nothing while it did not exist. Thus a cause is needed for anything to be brought into existence.

This proposition was taken up by the Kalam school of philosophy. This was a school of Arabic philosophers in the Abassid empire, most of whom were Muslims; it included famous philosophers such as al-Kindi, al-Gazali and Ibn Rushd. The Kalam philosophers restated Aristotle’s principle that a cause is needed to bring anything into existence in these words:-

#### **Aristotle’s Four Causes**

Aristotle identified four causes for objects and phenomena within the universe. The causes can be illustrated with respect to building a house:-

1. **The Material Cause:** These are the materials from which the object is made. In the case of a house, these are the bricks, mortar, wood and roofing tiles that the house is made of.
2. **The Formal Cause:** This is what determines the shape of the object at the end. In this case it includes the plans of the house which show how and where the walls roof etc. should go.
3. **The Efficient Cause:** This is the effort that is put in to produce the object. In the case of the house this is the work put in by the builders to construct it.
4. **The Final Cause:** This is the purpose for which the object was made. In the case of the house it could be in order to make a profit for the builder.

These four causes can be identified in the universe. The material cause would be the matter and energy which appeared in the creation event (Big Bang), and the formal cause would be the laws of nature which determine how the universe would evolve from there. The efficient cause is the source of the energy which caused the creation event to occur and the final cause is the purpose behind the universe.

Science can tell about the material and formal causes of the universe, but is silent about the remaining two causes.

*Everything that has a beginning of existence has a cause of existence.*

This statement is a clear consequence of the statement that nothing can cause itself. If an entity has not caused itself, then it must have been caused by something else. However, a cause is only necessary if there has been a point where the object was not in existence; nothing is needed to bring into existence something that already existed.

This statement was then developed into the more elaborate Kalam argument:-

1. Everything that has a beginning of existence has a cause of existence.
2. The universe had a beginning of existence.
3. Therefore the universe had a cause of existence.

### **Infinite Regression and the Tower of Turtles**

The problem with an infinite regression is that it must have some point on which it can be anchored. If one supposes that there is an infinite chain of objects, each one causing its successor, then one has no answer to the problem of what causes the chain. No matter how far one moves back in the chain, each object is not capable of causing itself, and requires further explanation.

The obvious analogy is the “Tower of Turtles” story. In this a lecture on cosmology is interrupted by an elderly lady who tells the lecturer that his lecture is rubbish, and that in reality the world is flat and rests on the back of a turtle. When the lecturer asks the lady what supports this turtle, the lady says: “Don’t try to confuse me young man: from there on it’s turtles all the way down”.

The point is that the infinite regress of turtles still has no support. There may be an infinite number of them, but nothing is holding the sequence up. All that one would see would be an infinite pile of falling turtles.

In the same way, no chain of causation can support an infinite sequence of objects. In the end there needs to be an entity which can cause the rest, and in the infinite regression no such entity is present.

This argument was not necessarily considered to account for the universe as some philosophers of the ninth century believed that the universe was infinitely old, following the teaching of Aristotle. However, we now know that the universe had a beginning, and the Kalam argument shows that it must therefore have a cause outside the universe.

### **Aquinas’ Five Ways**

These are Aquinas’ five arguments for the existence of God. Not all of them are valid; in particular IV requires a watertight definition of “degree of perfection”. However, they are interesting from a historical point of view.:-

- I. **The Unmoved Mover:** This is the argument that God is needed to wind up the universe and keep it in motion. God provides the energy that is needed to cause the universe to show motion.
- II. **The First Cause:** This is the argument that there needs to be a cause for the universe. Aquinas believed in an eternal universe, but reasoned that this still needed a cause to allow it to exist. Now it is known that the universe had a creation event, this argument is even more secure.
- III. **The Argument from Contingency:** The universe and everything in it can either exist or not exist. It is impossible for everything to be like this because then there would be a point at which nothing existed. Therefore there must be a being whose existence is not contingent on anything else to allow the universe to exist. This necessary entity is God.
- IV. **The Argument from Degree:** Varying degrees of perfection can be assigned to various entities. One entity must be more perfect than the rest; this one is God.
- V. **The Teleological Argument:** All natural bodies follow laws. The bodies are themselves unintelligent, but action according to laws is characteristic of intelligence. There must therefore be an intelligent being who underwrites the laws of nature.

### **Aquinas and Necessary Beings**

Thomas Aquinas was a philosopher and theologian who worked in the 13<sup>th</sup> century AD. He produced five arguments for the existence of God which he called the “*Quinque Viae*” (Latin - “Five Ways”). The third of these arguments was the argument from contingency.

Aquinas divides things into two categories. An entity which can either exist or not exist are described as “contingent” entities. Contingent entities only exist because they have causes. Everything we can see, or can imagine, in the universe, is contingent.

An entity which does not need a cause is described as “necessary”. A necessary entity is one which can only

### Necessary and Contingent Entities

• A **Contingent entity** is an entity which can either exist or not exist. Because such an entity can possibly not exist it requires some other object to bring it into existence. Thus every contingent entity must have a cause.

• A **Necessary entity** is an entity which must, by its very nature, exist. There is no possibility that a necessary entity would not exist. Whatever idea that one has about the origins of the universe, it must begin with a necessary entity.

exist; there is no possibility of a necessary entity not existing. Aquinas showed that the existence of the universe requires the existence of at least one necessary entity.

Aquinas argued that we know of many entities where it would be possible for them not to exist: stars, tables, people and so on. Indeed, every object within the universe is contingent as the universe itself is contingent. It is quite possible for the universe to not exist. Therefore, Aquinas argues, there is a need for

another entity outside the universe to bring the universe into existence. This entity might itself be contingent, but if so it too will need a cause. Sooner or later, however, the sequence must terminate with a necessary entity.

The alternative is an infinite regression. To have an infinite regression which rests on nothing is no real alternative as there is nothing to cause the series of cause and event within it.

The full argument (couched in modern terms) goes something like this:-

1. **Things Exist.** This is a clear observation of the universe as it is and it is personal experience.
2. **It is possible for the things in the universe not to exist.** This is clearly the case. Things in the universe are destroyed quite frequently and we know that there was a time before which there was no universe. As the universe has not always existed, the things in it must have the possibility of non-existence. In other words, all the things which are part of our universe are contingent entities.
3. **Whatever has the possibility of non-existence and yet exists must have been caused to exist.** This is a consequence of the fact that a thing cannot bring itself into existence, since it must already exist to cause anything at all.
4. **There cannot be an infinite regression of causes to bring things into existence.** An ultimate regression of causes ultimately has no initial cause. An infinite regression of contingent entities is itself contingent; without a necessary entity to anchor it there is no reason for it to exist.
5. **Therefore there must be an uncaused cause.** Since the universe exists, but does not need to do so, it must have a cause. Ultimately any cause of the universe must rest on a necessary entity (an uncaused cause). Thus the existence of the universe guarantees the existence of at least one necessary entity.
6. **This uncaused cause is God.** This is a matter of definition. We simply define the necessary being at the start of the chain of causality to be God.

The argument from contingency is quite subtle, but it rests on premises which are either clearly true from observation (such as the observation that there are things which exist) or from unobjectionable truths (such as the observation that nothing can bring itself into existence).

### The First Cause

One can summarise the argument of first cause very simply. Every effect is the consequence of one or more prior causes. For something (A) to cause something else (B) A must exist before B.

The chain of causes must thus stretch back in time. However, it cannot stretch back in time infinitely because then there would be no anchor for the sequence.

Thus there must be a first cause which itself has no cause. This is the entity we call God.

### Could the Universe be Necessary

One of the ways that some atheists have attempted to answer the problem of first cause is to insist that the universe itself is necessary. This is the basis of the argument of Bertrand Russell (in his pamphlet "Why I am not a Christian") and is referred to by Richard Dawkins. In spite of this it is clear that the universe is contingent.

In fact it is well known that the universe is not necessary. The universe clearly had a beginning. This is obvious whenever one looks at the sky at night. This is dark with stars in it. If the universe was infinite in age then the fuel for the stars would have been exhausted and the heat of the universe would be uniformly distributed over the heavens.

As the universe had a beginning, it must be contingent. It cannot be said to be the ultimate explanation of existence.

### Further Considerations

The argument from contingency is a clear argument which indicates that the universe must have a cause which is prior to it. There are not many things that one can deduce about this cause from the idea of contingency alone, but there are some.

For example, the universe was brought into existence along with all the matter in it and all the laws of nature which govern it. This means that nothing which relies on the laws of nature in the universe can be the origin of the universe. The origin of the universe was not the result of natural law but was the result of something completely outside the universe and the laws of science. One can even say that the creator would need to be outside space and time, features which are properties internal to the universe. The creator is not made of anything in the universe.

A second conclusion that can be drawn about the creator is that the creator is a necessary being. One could imagine a progression of beings, but behind it all there must be a necessary being who did not come into existence and has no cause.

This is one logical argument among many for the existence of God. It is limited in what it tells one about God. It tells us that God is immensely powerful (he has made the universe), that he is eternal (a necessary being) and that he is not subject to the laws of nature. However, more information is needed to tell us more about God. One can deduce more from the design argument and the moral argument, among other things, but the best information about God comes from what God has chosen to reveal about himself.

## The Creation of the Universe

There are two possibilities for a universe. It could be eternal in itself, or it could come into existence as the result of a creation event. Aristotle was of the opinion that the universe was eternal (although he deduced the existence of a creator for it) and this idea continued to dominate science through the middle ages and into the 20th century. Even though there is obvious evidence, it was not until the middle of the 20th century that the more biblical idea of creation was taken seriously by scientists; indeed the phrase "Big Bang" was originally an attempt to belittle the theory. It was not until the end of the 1960s that the Big Bang was taken to be the most likely account of the origin of the universe.

## Evidence for the Creation Event

There is a considerable amount of evidence to show that the universe came into existence at some point in the past. This evidence includes the following:-

- **Olbers' Paradox:** This is the fact that the sky is dark at night. If the universe were infinite a line in any direction would terminate at a star and the sky would be as bright as the surface of the sun. If the universe is infinitely old but not infinite in extent then gravity would result in it collapsing to a singularity. Thus the universe must have had a beginning.

- **The Existence of Stars:** Stars retain their brightness by burning hydrogen to make helium. When the hydrogen is exhausted the star will collapse, producing a nova or a supernova (depending on the mass of the star). The fact that the stars have not exhausted their fuel shows that the universe is not infinitely old.
- **The Expansion of the Universe:** Measurements of doppler shift show that distant galaxies are travelling away from one another. Essentially the universe is expanding. If the expansion is run backwards to see what the universe was like in the past one comes to a point where it was all together at one point (the singularity) before this the universe could not have existed.
- **The Relative Abundances of Light Nuclei:** Some nuclei are not produced in sufficient quantities in stars to account for their abundance in the universe. The ratio of the amount of helium to that of hydrogen, for example, matches the predictions that come from the Big Bang theory. There are no stellar processes which produce deuterium that do not destroy it much more rapidly; there would be no deuterium at all unless it had been made in the creation event. However, what we know of the creation event predicts that deuterium should exist in approximately the proportion in which it is observed.

### The Big Bang and Creation

The evidence is overwhelmingly in favour of the idea that the universe had a beginning. This was a point (or very short period in time) at which the universe came into existence along with the laws that govern its workings, and including even such things as time and space.

The fact of a creation event was proposed by Georges Lemaître in the 1920s. He was then ridiculed by large numbers of other scientists because he was a Christian and because the theory looked to many as though it was simply a reading of the Bible into cosmology.

The reaction of materialistic scientists to the idea of a creation event was to reject it out of hand because it seemed to require them to think of God as the originator of the universe. These objections continued until almost 1990. The phrase “Big Bang” was used by early opponents of the theory to belittle it.

What this shows is a reaction to clear evidence of a creation event by those who did not wish to acknowledge the existence of a creator. It was a reaction which went directly against the evidence and which set the evidence aside in favour of an atheistic philosophical position.

There is considerably more evidence to support the idea that the universe came into existence at some point in the past, but much of it is technical and requires a longer summary.

### Reaction to the Creation Event

One of the big obstacles to the acceptance of the Big Bang theory as an explanation of the origin of the universe is that it has been seen as evidence for the existence of God. Atheists, in particular, were very resistant to accepting that any theory which included a creation event could be correct.

For example, Sir John Maddox, Physics editor of the journal Nature, honorary fellow of the Royal Society, and atheist wrote that the idea of a creation event for the universe was “thoroughly unacceptable” because it implied an “ultimate origin of our world” and gave creationists (by which he meant anyone who believes that the ultimate origin of the universe is God) “ample justification” for their beliefs. He wrote this in an article in 1989, long after the Big Bang Theory had been almost universally accepted<sup>1</sup>.

In “A brief history of time” Stephen Hawking wrote “Many people do not like the idea that time has a beginning, probably because it smacks of divine intervention”<sup>2</sup>.

Essentially many atheists saw the evidence that the universe came into existence in a creation event and were so troubled by the implication of this for their world-view that they refused to accept the evidence. However, the evidence is overwhelming and the picture of a creation event is now accepted as fact by all but the most die-hard atheists.

### Meaning of the Creation Event

The point about the evidence for the Big Bang is that it shows conclusively that the universe is a contingent object. As there was a point before which the universe did not exist, it is clearly possible for the universe to not exist. No scheme which treats the universe as a necessary system can be correct.

As the universe is contingent, it must have a cause. It was brought into existence by some prior entity. The creation of the universe included the creation of time and space; before the creation event there was nothing at all. Therefore none of the processes within the universe could have brought the universe into existence, as they did not exist before the creation event. There can have been no natural cause for the universe as none of the laws of nature existed before it. The only possible cause for the universe must be supernatural.

### Consequences

The central arguments of a large proportion of atheists, in the end boil down to the question of who made God, or to a question about the origins of God which suppose that God was created. The weakness of these arguments is that they all presuppose a created God. Once one realises that there is a simple logical distinction which is a consequence of the nature of causality, then the atheist arguments fail.

### Who Made God?

The most frequent, and simplest, of the questions that is brought out with great authority by atheists (usually in the naive belief that this is a significant problem) is the question “Who made God?”

For example, in his pamphlet “Why I am not a Christian”, Bertrand Russell includes the words:-

*If everything must have a cause, then God must have a cause. If there can be anything without a cause, it may just as well be the world as God, so that there cannot be any validity in that argument<sup>3</sup>.*

In the light of the analysis of Aristotle, the Kalam school and Thomas Aquinas, the answer is fairly obvious. The issue is the distinction between a necessary and a contingent entity. Russell is prepared to believe either that God was created or that the universe is eternal.

Neither of these can be the case. The fact of the Big Bang shows that the universe had a beginning. It came into existence. In the words of the Kalam statement “That which comes into existence must have a cause”. Hence the universe cannot be a necessary entity. God, on the other hand, is a necessary entity.

### Prior Existence

Various mechanisms have been proposed for bringing the universe into existence from a prior state which had lasted eternally beforehand. The proposed prior states include the idea of a *primaevial* atom, which contained the mass and energy of the universe, and a vacuum state which experienced a fluctuation that produced the entire universe.

Each of these ideas has its own technical problems. However, there is a serious reason that the universe cannot have come into existence by the mechanical decay of a prior state.

1. The prior state of the universe (vacuum, *primaevial* atom or the like) must have existed for an infinite time before it decayed to the universe.
2. This means that it was infinitely old at the time of decay.
3. In this infinite time the prior state must have gone through every possible conformation. None of these caused the prior state to turn into the universe.
4. Therefore there is no mechanical conformation which would cause the prior state to give rise to the universe.
5. Therefore no prior state (vacuum, *primaevial* atom etc.) can provide a possible explanation for the origin of the universe.

This reasoning applies to any possible system which might produce the universe by anything other than a mind. Any mechanistic system, whether deterministic or random, would not continue indefinitely before acting. Only mind would be able to do this. Thus the first cause of the universe must have a mind.



It is sad to see someone with a reputation for philosophy like that of Bertrand Russell making an elementary error of this kind. The point is that the question was answered long before Russell mentioned it, and as a philosopher one would expect him to have done a little research before deciding his conclusion. Richard Dawkins also makes use of the argument<sup>4</sup>, but usually in a more hidden and less explicit way. This suggests that Dawkins knows that there is a fairly straightforward answer to his argument which he intends to ignore.

### Why is God the Way He Is?

A second argument often deployed by atheists is the question of why God is the way he is. The question comes in the form of questions about the probability of God: “What is the probability that there is a loving God?”, or “What is the probability that there would be a God who is interested in creation?”.

This is an interesting question when one comes to think about the meaning of the statement. The interesting question is what is meant by the idea of a probability. There are four standard definitions of probability in use (see box). The formal definition avoids the idea that there is any meaning to probability, and so can be ignored. The classical definition assumes that there are many alternative situations which can occur; this is not the case for a necessary entity, which can only occur. The frequentist definition presumes that the process can be repeated many times, at least in principle; this is not the case for God, who has never been created but has always existed. The Bayesian definition is subjective and depends on the prior belief of the person making the estimate. It is therefore not meaningful to discuss the probability of God having some particular characteristic.

### The Meaning of Probability

Mathematicians have developed four possible definitions to explain what probability means:-

- **Classical Definition:** There are  $n$  possible alternative outcomes, all equally likely. Of these,  $r$  represent the event whose probability is to be calculated. The probability of this event is  $r/n$ .
- **Frequentist Definition:** If the situation is repeated  $n$  times,  $r$  of these will result in the relevant event. As  $n \rightarrow \infty$  the ratio  $r/n$  tends to represent the probability of the event.
- **Bayesian Definition:** The probability represents the degree of subjective confidence that a rational person would place on the event occurring. As further evidence is acquired this probability is modified according to Bayes' Theorem.
- **Formal Definition:** Probabilities are quantities which obey Kolmogorov's laws (the basic laws of probability theory). They have no other meaning.

None of these definitions is applicable to a first cause for the universe. Where a necessary entity is involved all experiments will produce the same result, in which the necessary entity exists.

In general the characteristics of God are given rather than determined by external factors. For there to be different kinds of God, God would have to be a contingent being. A necessary being must exist - there is no possibility of such a being not existing. As a consequence, the characteristics of that being are also given; they did not come into existence at any point either.

### Is God Constrained to be Moral?

This is often used as an attempt to rebutt the moral argument for the existence of God. The argument goes as follows:-

Question: Is the moral standard set by God a completely free choice, so that what we think of as absolute moral values are simply a whim, or is God constrained by some definition of right and wrong external to himself? If they are merely a whim, then God has not made a moral choice and the claim that God is good is meaningless. If they are determined by some absolute standard then God is subject to some superior principle and there is an infinite regress of gods.

The classical answer to this argument is that right and wrong are determined, not by God's arbitrary choice but by his nature. Because God has a character which applauds altruism and detests

### **The Moral Argument for God**

Investigation of human cultures from ancient Greece to modern Europe and from Norse teaching to classical China shows that all human beings share effectively the same idea of right and wrong. This is based on the idea that one should treat others the way that one would like to be treated in similar circumstances. Variations that occur are generally based on differences in local circumstances rather than a fundamental change in the idea of what is meant by right and wrong.

No scientific procedure can decide the difference between right and wrong; science describes what is while ethics describe what should be. Similarly no philosopher has managed to derive right and wrong from first principles using pure reason. The idea of right and wrong appears to be innate within human beings, but evolutionary theory suggests that such a trait should be eliminated - moral cheats gain an advantage over their ethical cousins.

Empirical evidence indicates that there is a universal moral standard which is shared by human beings. The only way that this could be seen is for an entity outside the universe to determine it. Such an entity would need to have a moral sense (in order to inculcate it in others) which means that it must have mind. It would have to be responsible for creation at some level, because the moral principle is written into human beings. There must be only one entity to determine moral standards, because otherwise multiple moralities would occur.

The existence of a moral standard implies the existence of a God who underwrites it. Every time that an atheist criticises the Bible on the grounds that it is allegedly immoral, or claims that Fascism is evil that atheist is admitting the existence of God.

unnecessary cruelty he has made altruism right and unnecessary cruelty wrong. Thus God has a choice, but because of his character he chooses the way that he has.

The idea of whether God is a good God or an evil one, is to some extent an anthropocentric issue. From our view we see God as being a good God, because what he chooses is good from our point of view. However, this is consistent with the moral standard that God sets.

However, without this view there is simply an infinite regression in setting moral standards.

The atheist attempt to discredit the argument from the existence of a universal moral standard is sometimes to suggest that no such thing exists. However this leaves the atheist in an awkward position; if there is no such thing as right and wrong, then how can one say that the atheist position is anything other than immoral? Those atheists who see this problem (and the modern new atheist movement seems to appreciate it) often appeal to the idea of infinite regress to attempt to overturn the theistic argument. However, the fact that God is a necessary being brings an end to this problem. A moral standard defined by the nature of a being whose existence is necessary is sufficient to anchor the difference between right and wrong, and avoids any kind of infinite regress.

### **The Laws of Nature**

The universe appears to be governed by laws of nature which are simple, comprehensible and mathematical. The idea that there are fundamental laws of nature is one of the cornerstones of Western civilisation, and one which has provided great dividends in terms of understanding the universe. There are two issues concerned with the laws of nature, the issue of the origin of these laws and the issue of miracles.

The Laws of nature clearly exist, and they clearly exist independently. The laws that govern the motion of planets already existed before there were any planets, and the laws that govern the behaviour of atoms must have existed at the creation event, before there were any atoms. The laws of nature are not simply a matter of objects finding their own behaviour as they came into existence. One can see that this is the case because objects which must have come into existence in regions which were at that point out of contact with one another (because they were too far away for light to have travelled there in the time since the creation event) still share the same laws of nature.

### *The Origin of the Laws*

One thing that is clear about the laws of nature is that, like the matter in the universe, they are contingent. Many possible consistent sets of laws of nature exist. Theoretical physicists frequently produce new equations which would be consistent as laws of nature; however, we can only decide which set of laws is a good approximation by carrying out experiments to observe them in action. If the laws of nature were necessary (ie they are required to exist by pure logic alone) they one should be able to discover what they are by pure logic alone.

Hence the laws of nature had to be brought into existence by something else, and the end of the chain of causation must be a necessary entity. Like the matter in the universe, the laws of nature need to be underwritten by a creative entity. Because they are more like mind than they are like matter, this would seem to imply a creator who has a mind.

### *Miracles*

The existence of the laws of nature is taken as an axiom by atheists when they consider miracles. Hume argued that miracles cannot occur because they would violate the laws of nature; this idea is shared by Richard Dawkins(TGD p187)<sup>5</sup>. In reality the atheists are arguing that miracles cannot happen by any process subject to the laws of nature.

This, of course, has been the basis of the understanding of miracles from Old Testament times. If one has no concept of laws of nature, then a miracle is as unremarkable as a thunderclap or an earthquake.

The insistence that miracles don't occur is equivalent to the statement that any God is limited by the laws of nature. This is would only be the case if God is inside the system of created things. The necessary God of the first cause argument is, of course, outside the laws of nature and, indeed, created these laws. The existence of any miracle, including such things as the resurrection of Jesus Christ, would be proof of the existence of such a God.

A second consequence of a belief in the laws of nature is the necessary origin of those laws in a necessary entity. To deny miracles on the grounds that they would violate the laws of nature is to admit the existence of a creative entity.

### **Conclusion**

The question "Who made God?" presumes a particular kind of God, one who was created. However, this is not the God of the Bible who created everything else, but is not himself created.

The argument of the atheists shows the pointlessness of supposing the existence of a created god, but the Bible is very scathing about such gods (it refers to them as idols). A Bible-believing Christian can say to the atheist "I don't believe in the God that you say doesn't exist!" The "who made God?" argument doesn't show anything at all with respect to the God of the Bible and the God of the Judeo-Christian religions.

#### **Are Atheists like Christians?**

Some theologians say that there is a point of contact between atheists and Christians. The atheists say that they don't believe in God, but the god that they always talk about, and hence the one that they don't believe in, is a created god. Christians (along with Jews and Muslims) are very clear that they too don't believe in a created god.

The God of the Bible is not like the gods that the atheists protest against. The God of the Bible is a necessary being, a God who provides the foundation for all the things that would otherwise result in an infinite regress. Cause, morality and laws of nature all need an ultimate cause. Even atheists need to account for these things. What do they rest existence on, if not on God?

It is clear from any consideration of causality that there must be a necessary entity, in other words an entity which was not created but which is the first cause of all other entities. The God of the Bible is exactly such as God. The argument of first cause remains a powerful argument for the existence of God.

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